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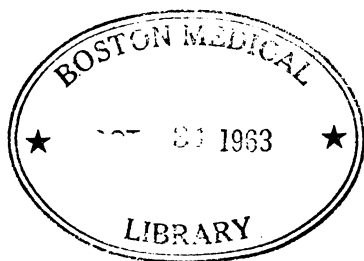
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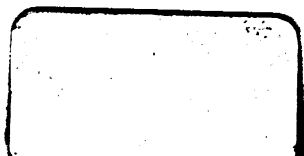
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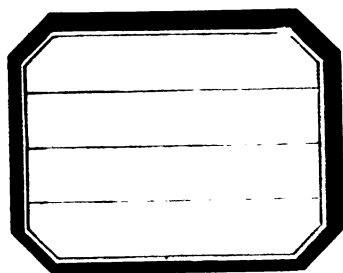
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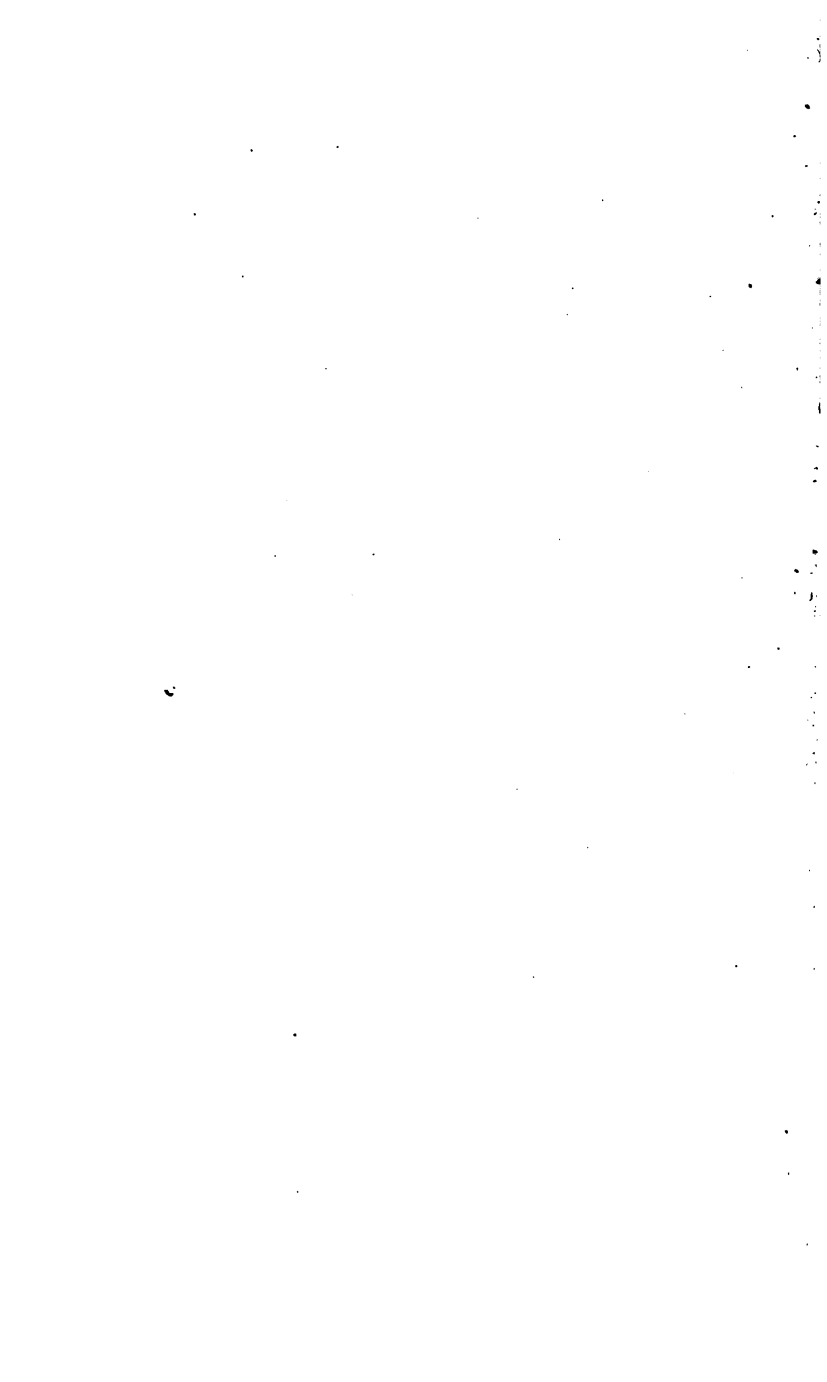
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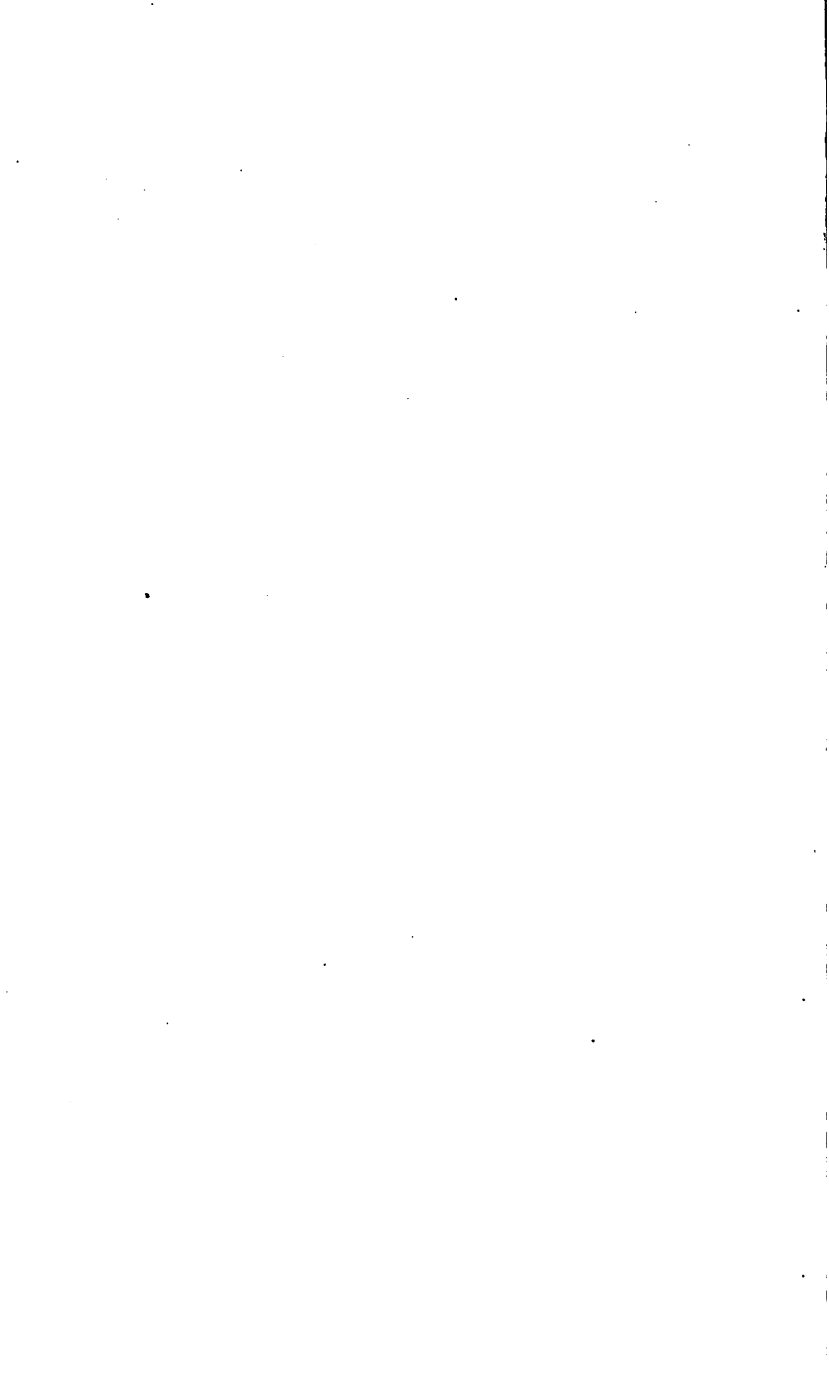
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A MAN'S FAITH



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BY

WILFRED T. GRENFELL, M.D.



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A MAN'S FAITH

I. HOW TO OBTAIN FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

WHAT most men want is knowledge, but I am speaking of faith, though, if I am not mistaken, there is little outside the science of numbers that is not really faith. We eat, sleep, work, and do everything by faith. The clearest idea I have of it I get from the letter to the Hebrews. It is something which makes a man give "substance to things hoped for." It is the kind of trust that makes one put his bottom dollar into a scheme. It is not mere intellectual assent. It is that particular motive power which makes a man give himself and everything he has to follow Jesus.

The first thought that rises to one's mind is that this is palpably a silly thing to do, that it is an act of superstition or credulity to act so unreservedly on an hypothesis. This keeps many men from taking the step. Yet the world is run by faith in premises, and success is won in every branch in proportion as men act, and act most promptly on their faith. This hindrance to faith, therefore, is a false one. I believe, with Paul, that ours is a perfectly reasonable faith. In things material, in things intellectual, in things spiritual, faith is the

power every time that buoys men up, and makes them float on the top in life's ocean. That is why young men are the successful heads of so many of the largest business concerns in the world. They will venture more on faith than the old fellows, who either "think they know," or "want to know more before," and by that time the chance has gone by.

WHAT SCIENTISTS AND STATESMEN RELY ON

Through faith men of science become Newtons, Faradays, Darwins, Fultons, Marconis. Men like these have faith in theories and confirm them by achievement and experiment. According to Paul, that is how Abraham and men like him did many things worth doing. Certainly Washington and Lincoln, Gordon and Livingston, Luther and Garibaldi, and such men of action, were primarily men of faith. Above all else Jesus himself is the supreme example of a man of faith. Even on his cross he was confident, when, as far as any one human could see, his faith in his success was absolutely unjustifiable. In every-day social life the same thing is true. The really loved in social life are those who have faith in others, and that even against odds. If the love of others and not their sham praise is the goal of social life, then faith again is the factor in its achievement.

Again, that which really succeeds cannot be altogether foolish. That which makes men do things is not to be sneered away because we do not altogether apprehend it. So in other departments of life, we can't deny what we don't understand, even if we want to. I have been

reading of the treatment of the adult criminals in Cleveland, and of the Juvenile Court of Denver. The idea of effecting the reform of the worst criminals and outcasts by removing all restraint from them and putting faith in them looked dangerously like credulity. But as a remedial element in punishment, which is the real object of all punishment, faith has proved itself far and away the most practical factor.

ITS TRANSFORMING TOUCH

These illustrations could be carried further. But I will satisfy myself by saying that simple faith in Christ as the Son of God seems to me to have been the father of action, and that in the right direction always. Its results have been obscured by the dilution of the simplicity of it. But the experience of the passing years clinches in my mind ever more firmly the conviction that nothing succeeds in transforming the individual like it. Nothing is so practical and potent a power as this faith for making bad men into good ones, and good men into more useful ones. "The life which I live," Paul said, "I live by faith in the Son of God," and I consider Paul lived a more useful life than any man of his time in inducing righteousness, joy, and peace into a moribund world, a triumphant life, a life I could consider a success, a life I should be only too glad to look back on or to take a record of with me wherever I go.

I do not forget, however, that not all men gauge success in the same way. Though if they stopped and thought more I believe they would

be much more unanimous on that point, and that then dollars would not loom quite so large. Therefore I consider my faith a practical thing, not a foolish one.

Nay, more, I own to considering it a desirable thing, and I presume I must thereby be content to write myself down a prejudiced witness henceforth. Yet I do not consider this a stultifying statement. I want to believe in Jesus Christ because I want to attain the ends I know such a faith insures. I consider faith, as Peter did, "a precious thing." I believe it can make me master of myself and of the world, as John did. I do not expect it to be based on the wisdom of to-day altogether. I believe with Paul that it is well based, "not on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God," which I see it exemplify. Where would it have been if based on the wisdom of Paul's day? As he most wisely said, "Our knowledge is incomplete." "It will be cast aside."

BOOKS YIELD TO LIFE

Books of miracles resulting from faith, even the New Testament itself, must, with the lapse of time lose ability to convince men of the value of that faith to-day amongst them, if they are unaccompanied by any evidence of its power to reproduce them. The preachers may spend ages proving the authenticity of the Gospels, but if I never saw and never heard of any manifestation of the power of faith in Jesus Christ, it would not make me believe. The preachers may prove faith in Christ made Simons into Peters, Sauls into Pauls, and Stephens into

heroes in the first century. But the ever-widening gap of time since these magnificent results were achieved by it makes it ever grow less potent as an evidence of the desirability of my having a like faith. What we want to know is, "Is this faith doing these things to-day?" The preacher that appeals and will convince men of sin, and the need of our having this faith, is a man in whom we see these miracles have been wrought again by the same power. He may be an orator, philosopher, theologian, or clergyman. He very often is not. But a man whom we personally know and who has been made into a new creature out of an old one, makes that individual appeal which was in the first century Christ's own way, and is, I believe, in the twentieth century still Christ's way of extending his kingdom.

It is not so easy a way as talking, but it is undeniable. Men who have been made simple, brave, unselfish, cheerful, hard workers, reliable, Christlike men, if day laborers "only," are Christ's most effectual appeal to twentieth century men. The man of unconquerable faith like Christ's own faith, breeds faith, and the man of unconquerable faith is the man who knows what that faith has done for himself. He is not always a scholar, and his faith does not always stand on twentieth century wisdom. But his will be the joy of that success without which one would expect preaching to be a prelude to insanity or despair.

Jesus and his contemporaries do not seem to have laid much stress on the book line of evidence either. He and they left the future of the faith they themselves gave their own lives to promul-

gate, to the evidences of its ever-living power in those who should accept it in the succeeding ages.

So I say I want this faith as a result of reasonably looking at it, and after many years I want more of it, and am exceedingly glad for what I have of it; just as I want to see my dogs well fed before leaving on a long sleigh journey, because I know that will make them able to go ahead.

THE REAL VERSUS THE FORMAL

Superstition or credulity make some men act. But very likely in the wrong direction, if they happen to be headed wrong. When a young man I used to spend my long vacation in a fishing smack, which I hired and went skipper of with a crew of amateurs. We had been trying to beat all one day out of a dangerous bay on the Welsh coast against a head wind and weather tide, and we were by no means out of danger when at night I turned over the watch to a colleague. Happening to come on deck later I found no one at the wheel, and Bishop's Rock Light uncomfortably close under our lee. My friend was forward having a smoke, and his excuse was: "Oh, let the old ship go where she likes. She'll be all right by morning." I have said he was an amateur, but I had not counted on his "faith." It was not an uncommon form of faith, but I preferred to turn to and take the wheel myself, for I had no faith in his kind of faith. It was plainly a different thing, less practical and desirable for leading to the haven where we would be than the kind of faith which

I know from experience is so valuable on the sea of life.

Looking back over one's life and trying to draw deductions, one discovers terrible failures, terribly wrong views of things, and of their values and their effects. But without any cant or emotional reasoning it seems to me the things one is glad to have done have always been the result of faith — faith which has been by no means sight, but faith in the Son of God, in Christ as the Saviour of the world to be. So my reason argues that if that faith is the redemption and salvation of the life that now is, it will serve as a premise to enter the next life with, whatever or wherever that may be. So as that is certainly "a thing hoped for," I try "to give all I can to it," *i. e.*, I have faith in it.

WHERE KNOWLEDGE IS NOT ESSENTIAL

It is true I don't know how to explain the individuality of the soul, or its persistence. I do not know what will be the punishment of sin. To me, certainly, it always seems to be punished. Nor, for the matter of that, do I see the justice of an eternal reward for temporary service. But these things do not worry me, as they are not immediately pressing, and I have every reason to suppose my intellect is not yet able to understand all these details, much as they interest me. To me death seems (with Newman Smyth) like birth, "only another crisis in the continuous history of life." For I see it is commonly very slight changes of circumstances, in what we call "nature," that make vast differences and induce entirely new series

of actions, for instance, a drop of water becoming ice or steam. Our life on the Labrador coast leaves little opportunity for speculation on these points, and I am waiting for some one else to find out and teach me more about them. One thing my faith does for me here which I consider desirable — it assures me that the regulation of these puzzles is under far better and wiser guidance than mine.

So that in these directions also faith induces a contented mind and a peace that passes "understanding."

Not every soul can be lost that does not possess a cut and dried opinion or faith on every subject. For instance, the Bible promises a special blessing to any one who understands aright the book of Revelation. Some will say, "That seems reasonable, because it is so very hard to understand." Well, I would like to understand it, but I confess I don't. I am curious at times to know what it all means. Possibly it would make it easier for me to be more keen and diligent in my service. It might give my faith a firmer foundation. It would certainly be a mental triumph, and that is itself a blessing. But at present it is denied me, and I must muddle along without it, walking by faith as far as this subject is concerned till its pages are unfolded to me.

When considerably younger I was invited to a big breakfast at which were the chief speakers at a great missionary conference in the city. During the ceremony a certain talker leaned across the table and asked me whether I was a premillennialist. I was considerably embarrassed, as this was one of my still-in-the-fog sub-

jects. Being young and not anxious to give myself away, I replied, "I am inclined at present to agree with Dr. —," who was sitting on my questioner's right. I did not think he would venture on a squabble, as the Doctor was supposed to be an expert on those lines, and I had no reason to suppose he was further astray on that particular point than anyone else. To obtain faith we must work along without "all knowledge." We shall know, Christ says, if we work. It is not reasonable to expect to know everything first, and to wait for that desirable consummation before we begin to commit ourselves to work.

This makes me believe that a good deal of so-called science is only deck hamper, which is a danger to any ship. My own mission steamer is often top-heavy with loads of logs on deck for the hospital fires, and she always then makes less progress. And top-heavy a lot of good men are, and a lot of other good men want to be; at least, so it seems to me.

God forbid that this should appear to be a plea for indolence, or a justification of intellectual idleness in matters that concern our future life. That would be as great a sin as counseling young men to neglect study and trust to chance for success in life so long as they possessed a blind faith. This is, on the contrary, a plea for working and learning thereby in the best school I know — the school of experience.

Nor is it an expression of fear of "high" or other kind of honest criticism, *i. e.*, research. "There is more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds," and honest doubt needs an intellectual as well as a physical process of treat-

ment. "Be ready to give a reason for your faith" needs mental application. Christ never opposed faith to reason, but gave it as a remedy for the impossibility of walking by sight. "Come, let us reason," is one Bible invitation to show twentieth century men the way to faith.

VERDICT OF THE OPEN MIND

The first method of obtaining faith that appeals to me is to inquire with unprejudiced mind: What has faith led to in history and in one's personal experience? Has it led to wealth? Faithful following of the Christ, which is faith, does not leave a man begging his bread in these days, any more than did godliness in David's day. The fact that the love of riches is a snare to many does not make the Bible deny that godliness is profitable. Moreover, though Christ considered their possessions a responsibility, he never anywhere said that rich men could not be his followers and remain rich.

Power? Yes. There can be no question Christ's men are master men in the best possible meaning of the word. I should say without any hesitation that in every field to-day everywhere, true following of Christ, that is, faith, always lands a man on top.

Praise of men? Certainly. There cannot be any denying the fact that the judgment of the twentieth century certainly will acclaim always the man who is faithful to Jesus Christ and his teachings. It has no use for trimmers, and we may take it for our comfort. The world's real opinion does not make many mistakes. The butterfly, animal-passion-satisfying, self-indulgent,

money-grabbing people are not the world, thank God.

Pleasure? Who will deny that truest pleasure is lasting pleasure? Who will deny to the true followers of the Christ among their acquaintances the possession of the best part, *i. e.*, the most soul-satisfying pleasure? Look at their faces.

Health? Since I am a doctor, the very query makes me smile. Superstition does not give health. But Christ-following does. Can we ever think of the Christ suffering the consequences of indiscretions for breach of health laws?

Without going further I should say that the evidence of history and biography is that faith is profitable. The evidence of my own observations and that of others indorses that conviction. The experiences of my own faith — feeble as it has been, afford me a testimony I cannot escape from, that the trial of it in action justifies all the claim Christ made for it. I am, therefore, convinced it renders mighty works possible, and I want it.

A DAY WITH MR. MOODY

In 1883 I chanced to turn in to one of D. L. Moody's great tent meetings in the slums of East London. I was amazed to see on the platform with him several men whose athletic prowess was world-famous. That was a credential to me that it was worth stopping to listen to what was going to be said. I still believe athletic success is an invaluable asset to a preacher. Christ, I am sure, wants football, baseball, and

track team men in an age when theological expositions, however deep and learned, when orthodoxy, conventionality, or even correct vestments and ritual, have so little attraction for the young men who shall be leaders to-morrow.

I stayed, listened, and learned at once one thing: that if I had any faith it was not the kind these men possessed. As far as I could judge I possessed an unreal, spectral resemblance of the genuine article, strong enough to keep me from wanting anything better. I would always attend a place of worship to please any one who wished me to, rather than be conscious of offending them. But my faith must have been the nearest resemblance to a Grand Bank fog that anything in that line can be. For it began and ended nowhere, and helped nobody, except to get adrift on the ocean, and hopelessly lose sight of everything. I can honestly say I had all my life been a more or less regular attendant at Sunday church services. But the numberless parsons I had listened to had never succeeded in teaching me that God gave us faith as a potent factor in life to enable us to do things, and therefore that I should expect direct results from it. I can scarcely believe they ever tried hard to do this, or at any rate were disappointed in any way at their lack of success, as their Master certainly says he will be. I learned at that meeting that what the men who spoke possessed was a faith worthy of strong men, and I went out into those sordid slums knowing I wanted it.

Now that is certainly the first step to getting anything. It is the attitude of mind we

must come in if we are to obtain any valuable thing. Men often come seeking faith as they did of old, demanding a special portent for themselves. That is, they begin by saying, "If you don't convince my mind of such and such a thing I'm going to accept none of your faith." Things valuable are not, as a rule, picked up in this world in that way. A farmer, after listening to a long temperance lecture, soliloquized as follows: "T' preacher proved it weren't no good to no one, and he proved it done a lot o' harm to every one, but he did not prove I did not like 'un,' so I means to have 'un' after all."

THE ARGUMENT OF A LIFE

How are men to learn to *want* this faith? For four years at college I lived with an able lecturer of the Christian Evidence Society. Many of his debates with unbelievers I attended. I cannot remember a single one being led to faith through these debates, though some who had faith already were strengthened in it. On the other hand, I remember well how the loving, unselfish ministrations of a Salvation Army lass, who attended one of the most vehement of his opponents when he was sick and forgotten, brought that man to a lively faith that made a new man of him. His intellect was no longer a stumbling-block. His heart was won. Intellectual humility is an essential stepping-stone to faith. If my mind fails to understand the "how" and "why," I do not dream of denying the possibility of a solution being found on that ground. The advancing years are ceaselessly

teaching me new things, and faith tells me that one day "I shall know even as I am known."

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIMENT

To learn to value anything about which we are not willing to take other men's opinions, we must try them for ourselves. This process may go on unconsciously, and not all men know the moment that their intellect was convinced, or their will yielded. I have known men who never had the experience of a settled date that they would point to. But those very men were giving their all to faith, and were men of faith, "a faith of which they needed not to be ashamed." They have a full right to the joy and peace it brings.

What, then, is the really greatest hindrance to the acceptance of faith? Surely it is the contemptible following of so many of us, who profess to possess it, men who arrogate orthodoxy to themselves, and who try to strengthen their position by shouting at others, instead of working honestly and whole-heartedly in the vineyard. These poor advertisements are widely read. No one would want to risk becoming like them.

Are you seeking faith? How are you to get it? Eve saw the apple. Eve saw it was good. Eve wanted it. So she just put out her hand and took it. The poor fisherman was washed over the side. Somehow his captain saw him struggling in the dark waters and threw him a life-buoy that would save him. Still he had to reach out his hand and take it.

To sum up faith in Christ. It is reasonable. It is practical. It is desirable. Its results are its own appeal. It is unreasonable to demand exact knowledge of every detail in terms of the science of to-day. The best school for understanding more of it is that of experience. In history, in the lives of others, and in our own, we can see that it has always justified its claims. Its nobility, its true manliness, are absolutely undeniable. When the Master says "Come," what reason can I advance for refusal? Shall I not here and now say, "I will"?

II. HOW TO USE FAITH

THE mistake about the use of faith is the worst mistake in the world. It makes young manhood despise faith. We mix up the use of faith with black coats, clerical collars, monkish gowns. We think of the life of faith as unnumbered religious services, convent or monastic practices, refraining from cards, theaters, wines, smoking, swearing, etc. We think of the "soul's awakening" as a desire to cross the hands on the chest, and turn up the eyes and carry a large book about, and probably wear a long gown like a Chinese woman's, ill adapted for easy movement and exceedingly undesirable. We think of the perfected life in heaven as encumbered with halos and white nightgowns and wings on our backs, and our probable occupation as being eternal hymn-singing or harp-playing.

MISERY IS NOT RELIGION

It seems impious to think of wearing rational dress, of baseball, of swimming, boating, or of doing anything else we really enjoy, in heaven. Thus we associate, in a dumb sort of a way, the use of faith here below with abstinence from everything the healthy young human animal naturally loves, and with the infliction of numberless exercises that he hates. We stimulate him to voluntarily endure these by the prospects

of a future that we paint as even still more distasteful. How often I have thought I would far sooner not be wakened out of my grave if I had to listen to everlasting harp-playing. I have looked at the goody-goody pictures, I have read the goody-goody books. I have hoped I would not have to lead a lamb about by a string.

With all the boys of my acquaintance, we hated going to church. I have made my nose bleed more than once to escape evening services, and had headache and made excuses all I dared to escape. My brother was flogged for melting toffee on the hot-water pipes in church; we left some of the silver paper behind and that betrayed us. He was almost expelled from school for putting beeswax on the boys' seats in front, to the detriment of several pairs of trousers. We did all we could to enliven the time we had to put in there, and thought it well worth the risk of the stick after. There were two prayers in the morning service and one in the evening I could always sleep through safely, to be wakened in time to sit up when the others rose.

The only Sunday service I loved was the hour reading before tea, when my mother read to us good books like Hesba Stretton's, Mrs. Walton's, Mrs. Gaskell's. We used to lie on the floor, or anywhere about. I can tell those stories now. I have lived those hours over again many times since. I have read out of those same books in lodging-houses, hospitals, and fishing-vessels, and they have brought tears into eyes I never saw them in before. There is a great deal of the child left in all of us men and women, and the hatred of the child for the con-

ventional use of faith is perpetuated in manhood. The way that repels the child is not the way to attract the heart of the adult. The right use of faith is not to make the whole thing hateful and contemptible.

A THING WORTH HAVING

In the countries where Jesus is nominally most eloquently and frequently advertised, as far as words and sermons and ceremonies go, the bulk of people never think of faith in Christ at all as a valuable practical asset; a mug o' beer, the latest motor car, an evening in a dive, a house-party at Newport — anything is rated higher and more desirable than faith in Christ. I have known the same man give twenty dollars for an electric belt and fifty cents to the parson for his yearly dues. I was talking to a poor fellow convicted of stealing. He had been well brought up, *i. e.*, made to go to church, to read the Bible, and to say his prayers. Yet the idea of Christ caring had so little occurred to him, I could see instantly the reflex face expression which showed me he thought, "Now for some cant." It was the sort of look the men in the ten-cent lodging-houses used to assume when, after listening to my feeble efforts at preaching, they sidled up to "borrow ten cents for a night's lodging." We well knew this to mean a whisky. That is to say, they thought all preaching was done by fools or hypocrites.

What is wrong, then? Is it the faith itself? I do not pretend to know many things, but I do know that is not at fault. Once I was blind. Now I see. That's the sort of evidence I base

my knowledge on, and I no longer feel a shiver when some scientific magnate pooh-poohs the Master. Think of it! The professors of the inexact sciences pooh-poohing the Son of God.

One of my hardest trials in life has been to have to keep the secrets of so many people. As a doctor in missionary life one finds out so many skeletons in cupboards. It is hard not to tell news. It is harder still not to tell good news. Not to do it makes you feel as a boy felt after a Christmas dinner — as if he “must burst.” But it is worse again when you have a truth that you know to be a truth, a truth of infinite practical daily value forever to those you love best, and *yet* you cannot tell it. You can say it. You can quartet it. You can monotone it. You can say it in a black coat, in vestments, at matins, at evensong, at the solemn feasts, at the new moons. But still you have not conveyed your truth to your dearest friend, the man who shared your rooms, and studied and competed with you, who played on the team with you, and who trusted you with a pass five yards from the enemy’s goal line. Yet he won’t take it from your lips that faith in Jesus Christ is worth a red cent — won’t accept it. However, the heathen, the stranger, who knows not your inner life, is more likely to listen. Where is the fault? Is the faith in Christ really not of value? Or is it that your use of the faith fails to commend it? If you are really eager to give that inestimable gift to your friend, your husband, your darling boy, and fail, is there something wrong in your use of it, your method of commending it? Does it not make a man’s heart cry out, “My God! is my conventional use of

faith the cause of preventing others from accepting it?"

We are in the deepest trouble as I write. Two boys that we loved and trusted have been found to have been for weeks betraying that trust. There is no question in our hearts of revenge or retributive punishment. The whole issue is, what remedy can save these lads that we still love, save them for usefulness for the Master that we know they are capable of? Is faith in Christ able, and how shall we use it? I am absolutely certain it can.

THE WILL THE KEY

But I know you will ask how shall the converted man use faith in his own life? How shall he do God's will? First, he must absolutely finally decide he is willing to use faith, willing to do God's will as far as he knows it every time, willing to pray with Jesus in deed as well as word, "not my will but thine." Beyond that no human being can lay down the law for another. It must be understood that no reservation must be allowed. Jesus could not come down from his cross. All your heart, all your soul, all your strength — either give it *all* consciously, or give it all up, I should say. Lukewarm adherents will be spued out anyhow.

How to use faith was twenty-five years ago first presented to myself, a medical student in East London. I knew that the right way to use muscles was to use them, and I argued a similar treatment was what faith needed. I knew that singing about it and praying for it was not so good for it. One reason that had kept me from

the pious men, or "pi-men," as they were called, had been that I considered them good at little else but piety. My tastes had not all altered because I had become a Christian man, nor had my common sense deserted me. I wanted to use my faith. Frequent meetings at night in rather stuffy rooms, attended mostly by women, had no more attractions for me than before. At these, also, so many prayed for things I could not raise any enthusiasm for, and as my Master prayed mostly alone, I decided there was, at any rate, no necessity for me to trespass further on my evenings. Moreover, I very soon abandoned attending two services on Sunday unless I was to take part in one. There is a selfishness in singing hymns and prayers that God may do things for us and others, while we do nothing but the singing. I had no time for preaching in the week, and my soul was far from satisfied. Our parson, good man, gave us a Bible reading Sunday morning, and made his evangelical appeal at night. The first pleased me, because I always gauge the value of a sermon by the new thoughts I can write into my Bible from it. Many a pilgrimage I made to hear Dr. Joseph Parker. The second pleased me because it enabled me to leave and go out into the highway and echo the appeal as well as I could.

Among the Christians, so called, whom I knew at that time of my life, none were "doing anything at it" that attracted me. Two energetic acquaintances went on Sundays to fasting communions (alas! I never saw much difference between them and any one else in any other way). If I must confess the truth, in a

dilemma like this, even then it still seemed strange to ask God about so every-day a matter as to what I ought to do. If any of my college friends had told me they had done something as an answer to prayer, the result of my own deductions would have been that I should have been hugely amused at the joke. It would have brought a blush to my face to venture to tell them anything of the kind; indeed, it should have been, for it would have been quite unnatural. To prove my estimate of the value of personal prayer at that time, I was giving an hour a day before breakfast, in Victoria Park, to throwing the sixteen-pound hammer, and an hour at night to running around the Hackney common in the dark to train my body, for I knew that was practically valuable. But I seldom troubled myself to repeat more than a sleepy general petition before going to bed.

THE PRAYER THAT COUNTS

Long prayers have not now become a habit with me. The Master himself at times prayed for long hours, and there are special occasions, perhaps, when we all can feebly imitate him there. But I don't for a moment believe now that we are to be heard one whit more for our much speaking. Hard-work praying is quite another matter. If we are willing to submit our will to his, he knows our hearts, and can guard our actions and words to-day as quickly as he did Nehemiah of old in the king's presence.

I have attended live, helpful prayer meetings. But if I'm tempted to gossip, or scold, or be

vain and selfish, or to waste time and talent, or to set a poor example, what is the use of waiting for church time or prayer-meeting? A brief "God help me" at the time is more reasonable. Or again, if I've done a mean act to any one, the only honest or effectual prayer is to go and put it right. That is the only kind of prayer that calls for Christ's spirit, and helps out more next time. Surely in a matter so closely affecting his own kingdom as prayer, Jesus gave his disciples the best advice possible when they asked him. The wording he gave was exceedingly brief, and the main petition was that we might do his will in his strength.

MY FIRST SUNDAY-SCHOOL CLASS

The answer to my prayer for work was the offer of a boys' class in a Sunday-school, which it cost me no little effort to accept. From the few suggestions made and asked, it might have been as easy a task as teaching my terrier to sit up. As far as I judged, a few words at a weekly meeting, asking God to do the bulk of the work, was sufficient qualification for success. I was soon to be sorely undeceived. If ever I felt like a fish out of water, it was when I walked into that, my first Sunday-school, and heard myself called "teacher" by a number of unkempt urchins. Even the illustrations from the "guide-book to the lesson" seemed lamentably ineffective in appealing to them, and I went out discouraged. By plodding along I taught them who killed Goliath, and much more useful knowledge, a good deal of which was not in the guide-book. For instance, that

it did not pay to come to school as long as you sucked peppermints, and that the use of hair oil meant "out you go."

But I seemed as far from their hearts and confidences as ever. Here, however, I must state my deepest conviction that absolutely the only *essential*, initial assets are devotion to Jesus Christ and common sense, if you wish to be a successful worker in the kingdom. Our English Sunday-schools are very different from the American, and mine did not commend itself to me any more after my conversion than before it. It was altogether too mild an entertainment to satisfy my desire for work. As I knew, however, what had appealed to me, I decided to try that. I started a movable gymnasium in our sitting-room with one night a week for boxing, fencing, and gymnastics. The parallel bars were the only trouble to fix. This, at least, taught the boys we could beat them at other things besides Bible stories. In this way we learned to trust and to love one another, and this soon gave me an entry into their homes. But the idea of boxing displeased our parson, and I was ignominiously dismissed from the roll of teachers. The adaptable dining-room, however, served excellently for a class-room, and when I started anew all my old scholars, unbidden, sought a place.

Using my faith on the same principle, I regularly took my poor lads with me for my summer holidays, rather than leave them in their sweatshops, and on my return tell them what a good time I had been having while I prayed for their souls. My boys learned to swim, to row, to sail a boat, to play football, to box, to

drill, to handle a gun, etc., and the class increased largely in numbers and some are still among my best friends to-day. The outlay called for by my faith along that line has paid me personally all the way.

OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS

The afternoon class, however, left Sunday night free, and I had the good luck, as I thought, to fall in with a young Australian doctor, who was studying at the hospital and preaching in the slums of Radcliffe Highway on Sunday evenings. I have long since learned to consider this an answer to my prayers.

It makes me now feel that religion has grown with me to be altogether "too respectable" as I think of the ragged-school we held there, and the short evening services in six or seven underground lodging-houses. No one steals the hymn-books now, or comes to service with their eyes blacked by the police, or breaks the pictures and furniture because you get in a minute or two after time, or kicks you hard as you throw them out for misbehavior. It seems strange how much we two enjoyed that odd work. Perhaps it is because we like things by contrast, and it gave one a better change and, therefore, rest, than going down for a week-end to some friend in the country and having an extra dinner, with a cigar and a snooze after on a lounge in the conservatory, even if one salved one's conscience for the loss of opportunity by attending evensong after. There is a terrible danger to faith in too much respectability. The world's smile has danger for the follower

of Jesus Christ. When the Episcopalians were respectable God raised Methodism, and with Methodism the Salvation Army.

WINNING ONE'S COMPANIONS

How to use faith among my companions and my superiors was quite another question. I was then unable to give an answer if my equals said Huxley and Tyndall, Berthollet and Voltaire, Froude and Renan, Morley and Mrs. Humphry Ward and others had pulverized the claims of Jesus. I could only argue that I believed it because I did. Like the woman who sank in the pond for the last time, snapping two fingers to indicate "scissors." It was worse with my superiors. Every time that I found a man sneering at faith whose intellect I bowed down before, as a student will before his teachers, a cold shiver would run down my back, or would leave my heart like lead till I got back to the tonic of my boys of the ragged-school. I had been for years nominally a Christian, and yet I certainly had no experience to argue from. The results of previous years had left in my mind only the unexpressed deduction that Christianity was a failure, and its adherents among young men, poor-spirited, only those who sought an insurance ticket for heaven.

I cannot help inserting here an incident that greatly helped to clinch in my mind that the right way for me to use faith was to live it. We had been playing a big football match, and I was captain of our team. Afterwards we dressed in a saloon parlor. While dressing a great crowd of men were in the room and some-

one, mounting on the table, began reading and vilely commenting on a portion of the Bible. It seemed natural enough to ask the man to refrain till I was no longer forced to be present, to which, sheepishly enough, he assented. Some years after a poor student, who had gone wrong, came, to my great surprise, to ask advice from me. He had been apparently in the saloon at the time of the above incident. He told me that my feeble protest had gone home to his heart. Such unimportant trifles apparently are the right use of faith, and I feel sure that a protest against doubtful things naturally and modestly made in places where such things would be expected to go unchallenged, does more for Christ than much more voluble ones made in gatherings where everyone is looking out for such things. I have had several similar experiences.

God forbid I should underrate the value of being able to enter a word of intelligent protest against false statements, such as that missionaries are the cause of half the wars, that men of science have given up faith in miracles, etc., etc. But when the brain is not able to devote time to learning answers to every question a man must be satisfied with some other way. More than that, I feel that to refute an argument is never so powerful an advertisement for Christ as an act that is a testimony to his power to change men.

WHY I WENT TO LABRADOR

One more personal experience I feel constrained to relate. I have often been asked how I came to choose Labrador or the deep sea as

a field for a life-work. It is my habit constantly to ask God to teach me each day how to rightly use my faith. I have never had any doubt that he does so. Yet I can honestly say I never went through any great crisis of deciding to renounce the pleasures of life, and accept the "self-sacrificing life of a missionary." On the contrary, I ardently looked for a niche in the world suitable for my talents, and left it entirely with him whose guiding hand I have been able to see in the events of my life as plainly as ever I saw a pilot's hand directing my vessels on the many coasts I've sailed along.

My idea of pleasure has always been a realization of utility, either to the body, mind, or soul. Cards waste time, I think; so do most theaters; alcohol is always hurtful. I have avoided these and many such meats, without criticising others, like those, who, from my own childhood, I have seen using these things.

It gave me the keenest pleasure to go to sea. It was a perfect delight to find that I was the only and, therefore, the best doctor there. Long dinners, dancing, voluminous correspondence, I always hated. So I found no great deprivation in the simple life among the fishermen. Theology was unknown; there were no sects at sea, and when the work sought me absolutely without any seeking on my part, I gladly accepted it. That does not account for Labrador. No, it does n't. There has been a little effort, possibly, about the leaving home. But for enjoyment of life, body, soul, and spirit, I can only say each field of life I go into seems more delightful than the last. From this I argue the right way of faith must be an enjoy-

able use of it. I don't for a moment believe God intends his servants to have long faces, and if their work is a misery to them they ought to get out of it. For it cannot be where they are intended to be. To be like Jesus certainly cannot be to be unhappy and look wretched.

NEVER THE SAME AS KNOWLEDGE

It seems unnecessary to have been writing all this while that to use faith aright you must put it into use. It seems one must add another remark, however, of the same kind, viz., to use faith is to use faith and not knowledge. I had to travel fifteen miles the other day over the sea. The heavy pack-ice was too rough to travel over; but a long break had frozen over and was covered with smooth, thin ice. We trusted it and got home safely.

Towards God the use of faith is unquestioning trust and submission. Towards man it means to cease arguing and disputing and get to echoing that love that Christ himself evinced for all mankind, good, bad, or indifferent. He who loveth best, serveth best, and will readiest overlook wrongs done himself. Unlike Mrs. Grundy, the Master was not everlastingly scenting errors and exposing the sins of others. The Master said hard things about hypocrisy and much about want of faith, but very little about the Magdalene and the man who stole his brother's share of the property.

My first aid to retaining faith was a determination to keep it. I determined that if intellectual difficulties arose, I would wait till, like Henry Drummond's unanswered letters, they

answered themselves. And if they never did, well, I would wait till the mystery of life itself was solved. As a rule I found on that principle in a week or two I forgot all about them. The fact was I had a lot of medical work to do to keep up with my class. My spare time was devoted to athletics, and my new faith led me into Sunday-school work, summer camps, boys' brigade, and one night out of the precious six week-nights to boxing, fencing, and gymnasium class for my Sunday-school boys.

So I had no time for metaphysics, and I found most of the difficulties could easily wait. What did eternal punishment, eternal reward, eternal personal identity, the time the last day should arrive, predestination, postmillennialism, the meaning of the horned beast, the scarlet woman, the authenticity of St. John, the science of Genesis, the authorship of the Pentateuch, the puzzle about Cain's wife, infant baptism, the misdeeds of parsons and so-called Christians, matter to me? I had a kind of intellectual puzzle-box, and into that they all used to go, and I then got time to "keep-a-going." The story of Lot's wife helped me more than Guiness's *Approaching End of the Age*. Our Lord's remarks about the man who put his hand to the plow and looked back did me more good than all the books of the Christian Evidence Society. As for conferences, I got behind the cloak of that magnificent patriot and hero, the cup-bearer Nehemiah, and declined invitations even to Keswick, because that was the only time I had to take my Sunday-school class to camp in North Wales, and to Northfield, also, because that is my busiest season among the fishermen.

MR. MOODY WAS RIGHT

I cannot give any reasons why, beyond what I see Christ doing in the world to-day, but simply state the fact that now, twenty-five years since I heard D. L. Moody and his men tell what faith in Christ can do, I believe my faith has grown into knowledge. If that great man could rise from the grave and walk in here now, I fancy myself simply getting up and saying, "Mr. Moody, you were plumb right." Perhaps under these unusual circumstances I should, however, add, "Were you not?" Shall I ever forget the only other time I ever saw him? It was fourteen years later in a Boston hotel. "Mr. Moody," I said, "fourteen years ago I put my faith in Jesus Christ after hearing you preach." "Oh," he replied, looking me up and down, "and what have you been doing since?" On my replying he said, "Well, you don't repent it, do you?" "Certainly not." "Well, come to Tremont Temple this afternoon and tell them just that, and then you can go in the upper gallery and speak to your next-door neighbor. We were rather short of Christians up there yesterday. Good-by." He never asked me a single question about being a premillennialist, or even one from the Shorter Catechism.

THE WRITING THAT LASTS

Some one may say: "Your way to retain faith is just stultifying yourself. God gave you reason to know the truth." Agreed, but we don't all learn it out of Mills's Logic, or

the Greek Lexicon, or the new theology, or German criticism, or the Koran, or the Vedas, or the book of Mormon Doctrine, or Science and Health. No, nor out of the New Testament either. I am doubtful if Christ ever intended us to pin our faith on the New Testament or any other book solely, to say nothing of verbal inspiration. I think he would have written a book himself, and made sure of guaranteeing its authenticity for all time; or, at least he would have seen that more than two out of the twelve apostles gave an account of his life in writing. Job was anxious to have his words written in a book with leaden and iron letters, and so they were eventually, though I do not know that I could not get along very well if they had not been. But we have no record that Jesus Christ's words, though they advance such stupendous claims, include such absolutely appalling statements that they have upset kingdoms, swept the civilized world, and transformed the nations who listened to them, were, so far as I know, ever written down at his personal request, or even at all, till a very long while, many years after his death.

Jesus wrote in far more indelible letters. He wrote in language which the knowledge of the succeeding ages, as it grew in extent and showed the science of the past to have been foolishness, has as yet found no flaw in. He wrote in letters which the wayfaring man, though a fool, could understand; yes, and I believe can understand to-day, if he only will. He wrote in letters "which those who run may read," and that is a very necessary caligraphy to the twentieth century. For everyone is so much on the

run they have less and less time to devote to bell, book, and candle. They want sky signs, and, what is more, I believe these are there for them on every hand if they will only take time to look at them.

Young men fresh from the victories of faith in China, India, Japan, and the uttermost parts of the earth always get a hearing as they tell in plain English what they have seen. Many men wonder why there are such an increasing number of student volunteers. It is because these men know they will "see something for their money." Men get fired with enthusiasm, and will give themselves and their all as readily to-day as by the Galilean lake for the real article — for that which does things, for that which "gets there." Men with the capacity of Mackays will go to Uganda to live and die among savages, to engineer for Christ. Clowes will go to India to build canals; men of the personality of Livingstone will go to Africa to explore for Christ; men of the business capacity of Duncan will go to Metakatla to build cooperative enterprises for redskins. Military magnates like Charles Gordon will live in the slums of Greenwich, and we may all know men of wealth and social position to-day away in the outermost places of the earth living their whole day of life out there for Christ, just as well as they would in the first century. Not a solitary one of that kind of preacher has ever come whining home that no one will listen to them, and that their churches are empty. Write and preach in the language and letters in which Jesus told us the same message of good news; work in the ways and the spirit he worked in; walk in the footsteps he

trod, and men may argue and talk and criticise higher or lower till doomsday, but the masses of mankind will still flock to hear you, and you won't merely tickle their ears; you will renew their lives. You cannot help retaining faith in a fountain you see giving the water of life to men dying of thirst.

THE INWARD WITNESS

Then, if you are "losing faith in the Gadarene pig story," you won't miss that one miracle so much if you have to abandon it. For, if it is not irreverent to say so, you will have a dozen solid facts you could swear to in a court of law from your own personal experience, which will be ten times more helpful to yourself and to other men to-day than your final decision as to the fate of those unfortunate animals. If you have the evidence of "that which you have seen and heard" to give, instead of being anyhow ruled out of court by the majority of men because they appraise your evidence as unconvincing and inadmissible as mere book knowledge, you will be the most valuable witness for the Christ, and the most dangerous foe to the devil of doubt. You'll be on the same level as the imperturbable, but undeniable, blind man, whom all the priests and learned men could not phase, because he entirely upset them all by sticking to the fact, "one thing I know." "One thing at any rate I do know, and that is, I was myself blind, and now I see." If you are anxious to help others to retain faith, get out and do something for Christ's sake.

Moreover, if you want your own faith to be

anything but a weakling — a “sensitive plant,” use it, keep it about with you. Don’t be ashamed to show it and speak of it naturally as one would of one’s business or pleasure. The hothouse of an artistic edifice, the ornate trappings of faith’s environment, may give it a spur when it is drooping, but it is a poor environment to which to keep it permanently. It will surely make a weed of it if you don’t get it out into the open again very soon. Fads and faddists will be the outcrop. The cold storage of the convent or cloistered cell, the high fence of eccentric garments would be no help to me. These seem only like keeping your plant in a pot in the house, where plants that survive healthily for long are very rare indeed.

It was the evidence of the great growth of the kingdom Jesus founded, and still possessed without display of physical force, that so impressed the great Napoleon. The fact is, to help faith all men want testimonies; whether it be an applicant for a position, an investment for money, or a family doctor, we ask for “recommendations.” Men want to see that faith in Christ means regulated social problems and political problems, and transformed human hearts and homes.

There is a growing revolt against conventional religion. Thought is free, and the expression of it ever getting freer, both in word and action. Thank God for it. Men are beginning to see what they need, and so better to say what they want. Who needs preachers without a life-giving message? Such men are worse than useless as advertisements for faith nowadays.

FAITH AMONG THE LOWLY

Here is a good advertisement. A certain poor working-girl lived near a struggling widow with four children in a large city. She had no money to give her, though faith prompted her to do so. So she went and taught her the way in which she earned her own living, that was by special washing of fine articles, and eventually shared her rooms, and so she successfully bore the widow's burden with her.

Here is another. A man with four children was left on this coast with one barrel of flour to face the winter, when December set in. He could only buy more if he caught some fur, and would then have to go and haul it nearly twenty miles himself, weak as he was from poor diet. One of his neighbors suddenly came to his door and told him that his family of seven had eaten their last crust two days before. The man, for Christ's sake, gave him a baking-pan heaped full with flour, out of his one barrel.

Here is a man whose sole support for his family depended on a four-hundred-dollar net in which he had invested his all. Yet, for the sake of his neighbors, he, a professed follower of Christ, would not go out to save it from drift-ice on a Sunday. The one did for Christ; the other gave for Christ. The last made a sacrifice at great cost for Christ. Which makes you love and believe in Christ, these humble evidences of his power to-day, or those non-committal disquisitions, that correct ritual, that flowery language from the pulpit last Sunday morning?

“ ASK THE SKIPPER ”

My faith having come through the foolishness of preaching, I do not want to think of it as all folly. But my faith now is far more helped by seeing the fruit faith bears than by anything else. Personally, therefore, I preach (or try to) rather as an adjunct to my other work, than as the principal remedy for unfaith, or the most effectual weapon for Christ. Our staff is a company of doctors, engineers, teachers, sailors. I have listened to an appeal for faith in Christ made by the cook on my steamer, which was more eloquent than many I have heard from lawn sleeves. It was impossible to sleep through that discourse, or to be indifferent to it. It was simply a series of facts, which, knowing him, I knew were true, and they went right home to their mark. I was called once to see a man dying on a fishing-vessel off this coast. As I left the cabin he called out, “ You ’ve forgotten me, Doctor ; I ’m the man who was converted at — two years ago.” “ Well,” I said, “ what difference has it made to you ? ” “ Ask the skipper,” he replied. The remarks of his skipper were no end of a help to my faith.

UNFORMULATED FAITH

It is true much excellent, unselfish work is being done without any definite recognition of faith in God, or, perhaps, of the deity of Jesus Christ as its base. Most helpful have many such efforts been to me, Hull House in Chicago, or Dr. Edward Everett Hale’s work in Boston, far

from making me feel "there is, therefore, no room for Jesus Christ to-day," I err, if err I do, on the other side. I lodged a while ago on a journey with a revival preacher, and we fell to talking of a certain fisherman who had been plucky enough to add the work of a cooperative storekeeper to his daily work, that he might thereby help to fight the hateful truck system of trade, which was holding his fellows in a white slavery. The evangelist, a right good man to my knowledge, regretted the storekeeper was not a Christian. I quoted, "Christ says, 'He that is not against us is for us.'" "No," he replied, "Christ does n't say that; he says, 'He that is not with us is against us.'" I was glad when we looked up chapter and verse that he expressed no sorrow that Christ has made such a generous criterion.

BUT FAITH DOES HELP

Whatever factor it is makes men do good or unselfish work, let us by all means welcome and praise it. But I can only say still, I have found faith in Jesus Christ as Son of God make men do that which nothing else did, and bear and suffer with equanimity that which nothing else would. I have seen walk into the anæsthetising room and lie down on the table with a bright smile on her face, a delicate girl, who was to undergo a severe operation that meant life or death to her. The dread of the knife is magnified by the unfamiliarity of the people of the coast with modern surgical statistics. Yet I heard only yesterday two brave fellows' last words as they lost consciousness

before their operations, "Jesus have mercy on me."

Faith in Him is precious for other purposes than as a motive power to service. More than once I have had to go to the door of some tiny cottage; within was a happy wife, a loving mother, and prattling babes; the humble surroundings of the home have eaten into my soul, as they cried out of the hard toil and the loving care of him on whom even the bare necessities of life depended. For I was there to carry the news that the strong hand that toiled would never again bring help and comfort, that the brave heart which meant all the world to these helpless ones was lying silent in death. At that moment, if ever, I have known what faith in Jesus Christ meant, both to me and to others, a knowledge I can personally only lose when for me also all the apparent paradoxes of our human life shall be solved, or silenced, by our last grim enemy or friend.

EXERCISE ESSENTIAL

I have said nothing about the rationality of using the will-power to maintain our faith, the determination to keep it. It seems to me just as rational as a determination to keep anything else at all cost. Faith is a living thing, and will die if its environment is permitted to become incompatible. This is in our control, and that control must be exercised. Faith's immediate environment is body, soul, and spirit; and their health means its health, and their health depends on their environment. Too much fasting or feasting will undermine the health of each of

these. We can overfeed the body. An Alexander can die of surfeit. We can overtax the mind — much learning can make men mad. We can lay burdens on men's spirits they are unable to bear; or, again, we can wrongly feed or underfeed the body; we can let the mind atrophy, or choke it with rubbish; we can let the spirit starve for want of its "daily bread."

The health of the body involves avoiding doubtful indulgences, and a man is not to be condemned if he avoids alcohol, coffee, tobacco, or even meat under certain circumstances. It is surely a sign of wisdom to exercise the will in selecting food for the mind. Endless trashy literature, unnecessary conventional correspondence, special and extra-special editions of useless information are not conducive to mental salubrity. Too many conventions, multiplication of "services," just as much as narrow puritanism or dry-as-dust ecclesiasticism, are a danger to the soul. Mr. Moody said, with his sound common sense, "Once to take in Sundays is enough for the Christian man. He would be a stronger man if he used the rest of his time giving out."

Again, the wisdom of Christ stands out before the ages. He kept the Sabbath, the feasts; he observed the Jewish ordinances. But he did not condemn the Samaritans or his disciples for eating corn on the Sabbath, and he left no hard and fast rules for observing the first day of the week. Yet our abstinence in little things may be more far-reaching as a help in retaining faith than we might suppose, and a man is not necessarily a hypocrite because he won't even appear to work on a Sunday himself, won't play cards

for money, or is a total abstainer. If the white men in the South have voted "prohibition" solely for the sake of their black population, who is to throw stones at them?

While the body is growing it needs more care in its treatment. More conscious educational efforts are conceded to the mind while it is young and expanding. But the spirit never reaches maturity this side the grave; it must grow or die. So surely we must exercise effort on its behalf with sedulous care to life's very end, and the gates of pearl are closed behind us. Thus control and exercise of the whole man is essential for the maintenance of a faith that has life. We cannot drift into heaven like dead fish down a stream. Salvation must be worked out. Who, then, is to exercise this supreme control? Is it my will only, or God's will? "Not my will, but thine," was the Master's goal of prayer. "Teach me to do thy will" must be the petition and desire in the heart of the man who wishes to retain faith.

The practical issues of the above are obvious. The choice of food should be by knowledge rather than by natural appetite. How many babes on this coast perish from the ignorance of mothers, how much suffering and loss of power, and how much expense is incurred in this very harbor from sheer ignorance and want of effort to know more of dietetics. How much time men lose in reading books that would not receive the endorsement of one wise man as useful, or even fit food for the mind. Fiction enough to stimulate our imagination and keep us human is surely sufficient.

HELP FROM THE BIBLE

To me no book has been so helpful as the Bible. I do not believe in making people promise to read so much each day, as if it were a nasty medicine, or in binding one's self to do that. Common sense tells us that if it is to be good manure for a seedling faith, we must use it so as to understand it. To me the twentieth century version has been a great help because it is in newspaper language, and that is specially designed to convey ideas easily. The English of the Authorized Version may be as improving as the Latin of the Vulgate or the Greek of the Septuagint. But I go to my Bible for practical information as much as I do to the medical journals.

If my skipper confined his reading of the coast pilot to versions printed in King James English I should soon look out for someone else to keep me off the rocks, and bring me to the haven where I would be. We don't blame men in Wall Street for reading the financial news in modern American, and the Christ needs men in his service to be more up-to-date and alive and efficient even than stock-brokers. His men should be ahead of their day, as he was of his. The only commentary for reference I ever cared for was Matthew Henry's. I heard Mr. Spurgeon say, "If a man has n't got it he should sell his coat and get it." It is as practical as Mrs. Beaton's cookery books.

But I am no authority on books for helping faith. I scrawl all over my copies of the Bible. It makes them feel more like old friends. They

are cheap enough, and when one gets illegible you can invest in another. It is a great help to me to look back and see how my own faith has grown since last I annotated the same passage.

Much mental economy and much strain can be effected also by regulation of the use of all the modern luxuries of civilization — especially the telephone. I often wonder if having one's number in the book does n't really make one lose more than one gains. Cases of too much Christian work for the best health of the spirit have been reported. But mortality from that cause has not been a serious item in my small experience. I think I have seen more danger from a condition corresponding to "nervous prostration," and induced by similar causes. Too little work, not enough fresh air and exercise, too much introspection, and on this coast too much of that excellent text-book, *The Family Doctor*. This always reminds me of a friend who purchased a black bear for a pet. He put it to hibernate in a barrel when winter came on, and then he buried it. But he kept wanting to see if it was still there. So he dug it up after a few weeks only, and thereby woke it up and nearly killed it altogether.

Faith must be used to keep its vitality. No faith can survive long with the sleeping-sickness. It soon becomes flabby and useless.

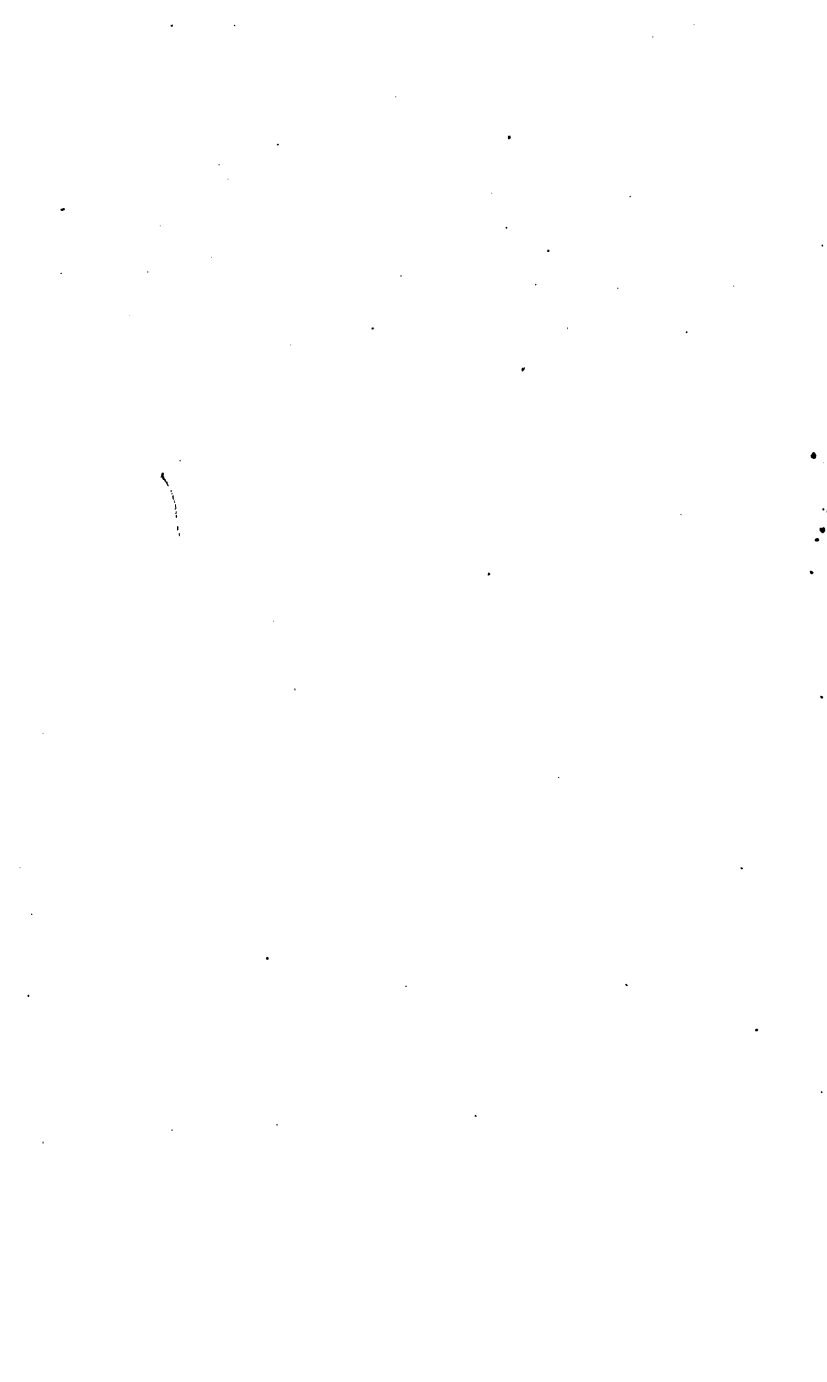
RENEWALS OF FAITH

Again, it will do the man who willingly indulges in pursuits and practices that he believes to be wrong no harm to find out that he has no real faith. The same may be said of the man

who does not make reparation that is possible for transgressions. But there is no excuse or authority for such a man allowing the devil of shame, or the fear of man's ridicule, preventing him again coming to the Christ for the cleansing that must precede renewal of faith. The fatal apathy into which so many such victims fall is probably the most fatal malady that befalls humanity.

So I must end where I began. I am determined, God helping me, that no man shall rob me of my faith. I won't hide it away. I'll keep it right around with me, if I can. I will see it gets exercise. I will feed it all I can, so that it shall not starve. I won't force it if I can avoid it, and make it weedy and weakling. It shall say no things it does not believe. When in real danger, if I can, I will go to someone stronger than I to help to keep it safe. But when that necessity arises to whom shall I look for help? Surely directly to him who I believe gave it to me. For I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep it against that day.





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